

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 EUR-12 AID-05 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/109 W

-----050992 180043Z /63

P 172340Z APR 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0750
INFO AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY LAGOS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 01478

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PORG, GA, UNDP

SUBJECT: GAMBIAN CANDIDACY FOR UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL

REF: (A) BANJUL 599; (B) USUN 1422

1. THE GAMBIA'S ACTING UNDER-SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, HASSUM CEESAY, IS IN NEW YORK TO SUPPORT THE GAMBIA'S CANDIDACY FOR UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL AT ECOSOC ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR END OF THIS WEEK OR EARLY NEXT WEEK. HE CALLED ON USUN ON 17 APRIL TO DELIVER A LETTER FROM THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, L.K. JABANG, TO AMBASSADOR YOUNG, DATED 14 APRIL. TEXT IS TRANSMITTED AS PARAGRAPH THREE BELOW. REQUEST DEPT'S GUIDANCE.

2. CEESAY MADE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS TO MISOFF. AFRICAN GROUP LAST WEEK SELECTED THREE CANDIDATES FROM AMONG THE NINE WHO WERE INTERESTED IN GOVERNING COUNCIL: THE GAMBIA FOR WESTERN REGION (TO WHICH NIGERIA BELONGS), EGYPT FOR NORTHERN REGION, AND ALGERIA FOR

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NORTHERN/SOUTHERN REGION (IN THE ABSENCE OF A CANDIDATE FROM SOUTHERN REGION). NIGERIA DID NOT ATTEND THE AFRICAN GROUP MEETING AND IS NOW CIRCULATING A NOTE TO ALL MISSIONS CONFIRMING ITS CANDIDACY FOR GOVERNING COUNCIL. THE GAMBIA WOULD NOT HESITATE TO DEFER TO NIGERIA IF THE ELECTION WERE CONCERNED WITH A BODY OTHER THAN ONE DEALING WITH UN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, IN

WHICH THE GAMBIA VITALLY INTERESTED FOR ITSELF AND AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SAHEL REGION. HE UNDERSTOOD NIGERIANS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN UNDP GC BECAUSE IT IS THEIR POLICY TO BELONG EITHER TO ECOSOC (THEY ARE TO LEAVE IT THIS YEAR) OR TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL.

3. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MINISTER JABANG'S LETTER.

RELYING ON THE VERY SPECIAL AND INCREASINGLY STRONG BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES, I WRITE TO SOLICIT YOUR PERSONAL ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR THE ELECTION OF THE GAMBIA TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNDP DURING THE PRESENT MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL IN NEW YORK.

AS YOU WILL EASILY APPRECIATE, THE GAMBIA, LIKE THE OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE SUDANO SAHELIAN SUB-REGION OF WEST AFRICA, IS CURRENTLY THE VICTIM OF SEVERE DROUGHT-TWICE IN LESS THAN SIX YEARS. THIS HAS REDUCED OUR NATIONAL OUTPUT BY SOME 45 OF THE ANNUAL AVERAGE, AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE END OF THE PHENOMENA IS NOT YET IN SIGHT. THIS MEANS COUNTRIES IN THIS SUB-REGION WILL BE OBLIGED TO FIND RECOURSE TO INCREASED INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO COMBAT THIS SITUATION, NOT ONLY FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THEIR PEOPLES, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUT ALSO FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR SOCIETIES. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNDP AS AN AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL AID CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED. THIS IS ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE GAMBIA'S PRESENT CANDIDATURE TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL. ANOTHER PRIMARY REASON IS THE REALITY THAT MY HEAD OF STATE, ALHAJI SIR DAWDA KAIRABA JAWARA, IS THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF STATE OF THE INTER STATE COMMITTEE FOR DROUGHT CONTROL IN THE SAHEL. THE EIGHT MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THIS ORGANIZATION WILL COLLECTIVELY HAVE TO DRAW HEAVILY FROM ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNDP AND UNSO TO CONTROL THE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT DURING THE COMING YEARS. WE CONSIDER IT ONLY NATURAL THAT THE COUNTRY THAT IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THEIR COMMON ORGANIZATION FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS WILL PAY A LEADING ROLE AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THEM AND THE UNDP AND UNSO. IN THIS RESPECT MEMBERSHIP TO THE UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL IS A MOST APPROPRIATE STATUS TO SECURE.

IN ORDER TO PERFORM OUR ROLE IN THE UN SYSTEM IN GENERAL, AND IN THE COUNCIL IN PARTICULAR, A DECISION TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT GAMBIAN PRESENCE IN NEW YORK

IS WELL IN TRAIN. MEANWHILE WE HAVE ALREADY ACCREDITED
AN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES. SO THAT, I CAN
ASSURE YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE QUESTION OF THE GAMBIA'S
ABSENCE IN NEW YORK CAN BE SET ASIDE AND SHOULD NO LONGER
BE A MAJOR CONSIDERATION IN THE MATTER.

MR. AMBASSADOR, YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE THAT THIS IS
THE VERY FIRST TIME THAT THE GAMBIA IS SEEKING THE
BACKING OF THE AFRICAN GROUP FOR ELECTION TO ANY POST

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANJUL
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IN A UN ORGAN OR AGENCY. WE HAVE GREAT FAITH AND
RESPECT FOR THE DECISIONS OF THE OAU IN THE QUESTION OF
AFRICAN CANDIDATURES TO THESE BODIES. THEREFORE, WE
HAVE NEVER CONTRADICTED THESE DECISIONS. UNFORTUNATELY
WE HAVE LEARNT THAT OUR PRESENT CANDIDATURE MIGHT BE
CHALLENGED OR QUESTIONED IN SOME QUARTERS IN NEW YORK.
THIS IS WHY I HAVE DECIDED TO WRITE TO YOU PERSONALLY AT
THIS CRUCIAL MOMENT TO SOLICIT YOUR ACTIVE SUPPORT AND
PROMOTION OF OUR CANDIDATURE. I AM ALSO DESPATCHING
MR. HASSAM CEESAY, HEAD OF THE DIVISION OF INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION TO DELIVER THIS LETTER TO YOU BY HAND AND TO
WORK WITH YOU ON THE FULFILLMENT OF MY REQUEST TO YOUR
EXCELLENCY.

WHILE REMAINING CERTAIN THAT BY PLACING THIS
PROBLEM IN YOUR HANDS THE INTERESTS OF OUR SUB-REGIONAL
ORGANIZATION CILSS, AND THE WISHES OF THE GAMBIA WILL BE
FULLY SERVED, PLEASED ALLOW ME TO ASSURE YOUR EXCELLENCY

OF MY HIGHEST FRATERNAL ESTEEM. END TEXT. LEONARD

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